

Message Text

SECRET

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

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DRAFTED BY: S/S-O:JHOGANSON

APPROVED BY: S/S-O:JHOGANSON

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P 262006Z APR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USCINCEUR PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 100735

EXDIS MILITARY ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT AMMAN 2225 ACTION SECSTATE INFO JIDDA 26
APR

QUOTE

S E C R E T AMMAN 2225

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON FROM PICKERING

DEPT PASS USCINCEUR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,MASS, JO, US,SA

SUBJECT: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE

REF: (A) STATE 99335, (B) JIDDA 2961 (C) AMMAN 2224

1. RECOGNIZE THAT WE CANNOT MASTERMIND IN GREAT
DETAIL WHAT SAUDIS MAY WANT TO SAY ON AIR DEFENSE IF
PACKAGE GOES FORWARD. THERE IS ALREADY A CERTAIN
ELEMENT OF UNCONTROLABILITY INTRODUCED BY MOST RECENT
EXCHANGE BRIEFED TO ME BY RIFAI THIS MORNING (ERF C).

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HOWEVER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE EITHER SIDE (SAUDI OR

JORDANIAN) WAS PASSING ON FINAL WORD FROM WHAT WE HAVE HEARD OF THE EXCHANGE. WE WILL ALSO DO OUR BEST TO KEEP DOWN PRESS COMMENT FROM HERE AS WELL AS OFFICIAL STATEMENTS, BUT APPARENT LEAKS TO THE "JERUSALEM POST" OF SENSITIVE DAO CABLES DO NOT HELP AND WE WILL HAVE TO CUT DOWN ON OUR REPORTING SOME TO STOP THIS.

2. CROWN PRINCE HASSAN'S VISIT REPRESENTS EITHER ANOTHER POSSIBLE INTRUSION INTO THE PROCESS OR ELSE A HELPFUL DEVELOPMENT DEPENDING ON HOW IT GETS HANDLED. MY UNDERSTANDING FROM THE KING AND CROWN PRINCE IS THAT HE WILL NOT BE INSTRUCTED TO RAISE THE ISSUE. HE PERSONALLY IS VERY FAVORABLE TO ANY ANTI-SOVIET SOLUTION. ON THIS BASIS I BRIEFED HIM ALONG THE LINES OF WHAT I HAD GIVEN KING IN THE PAST-- PHASED APPROACH, SOME SIGNS OF PROGRESS. ETC. HE ASKED ME WHAT WAS KING'S REACTION TO DOLS 520 MILLION PACKAGE (IT'S BEEN IN THE PRESS HERE AS YOU KNOW.) I SAID I DID NOT KNOW BECAUSE I HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS TO DISCUSS ANYTHING LIKE THAT WITH THE KING.

3. ADDITIONAL PROBLEM IS WAITING FOR US ON APRIL 30. I UNDERSTAND WE ARE ALL PROCEEDING ON BASIS THAT SOME RESPONSE WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM SAUDIS BY THEN. IF NOT, I EXPECT THAT JORDANIANS WILL THEN WANT TO TAKE SOME STEPS TOWARD THE SOVIETS. A SOVIET AIR FORCE DELEGATION IS EXPECTED IN MID-MAY. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE KING WILL BE INCLINED TO BEGIN MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENTS AGAIN AFTER THIS TIME PERIOD ROLLS AROUND. IT WOULD OF COURSE BE UNFORTUNATE IF A CATASTROPHE OF TIMING TOOK PLACE WHERE SAUDIS ARE READY TO MOVE AHEAD AND JORDANIANS THROW OVER THE TRACES AT SAME TIME, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE EXCELLENT WORK DONE ON THIS BY AMBASSADOR PROTER. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES -- IF IT BEGINS TO LOOK LIKE MORE TIME IS REQUIRED TO GET A SAUDI ANSWER -- I SUGGEST THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO HAVE SOME KIND OF A REQUEST TO JORDANIANS TO HOLD OFF UNTIL A DATE CERTAIN -- BEYOND WHICH THEY AND WE WOULD ASSUME NOTHING MORE CAN BE DONE. THIS WOULD HAVE TO COME FROM A HIGH LEVEL EITHER IN THE FORM OF INSTRUCTION TO ME OR A MESSAGE. LATTER WOULD BE PREFERABLE, ON THE BASIS OF SECRETARY'S LAST MESSAGE TO KING, BUT YOU WILL BE THE SECRET

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BEST JUDGE OF WHAT CAN BE DONE. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR BILL PORTER'S JUDGMENT ABOUT WHAT MORE IF ANYTHING, WE CAN SAFELY SAY TO JORDANIANS IN SUCH AN INSTRUCTION OR MESSAGE ABOUT CURRENT SAUDI VIEWS IF THIS CONTINGENCY ARISES. PRESUME IT MIGHT ALSO BE POSSIBLE TO CONTINUE HAWK CONTRACTS (AND JORDANIAN TRAINING) IN A " HOLD" STATUS FOR AN ADDITIONAL TIME PERIOD WHICH MIGHT ALSO HELP HERE IN EXTENDING DEADLINES.

PICKERING UNQUOTE SISCO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FINANCE, AIR DEFENSE, NEGOTIATIONS, MISSILES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE100735
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O:JHOGANSON
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760158-0286
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760420/aaaaaqto.tel
Line Count: 116
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 STATE 99335, 76 JIDDA 2961, 76 AMMAN 2224
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 JUN 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <15 JUN 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, JO, US, SA
To: USCINCEUR
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006